

REMARKS

The present Amendment amends claims 1, 6, 11, 15 and 16, cancels claims 4, 9 and 13, leaves claims 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 and 14 unchanged, and adds new claims 17 and 18. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, and 14-18.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicated that claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 13 and 14 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the claim objections set forth in the Office Action, and to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

It is noted that the Office Action dated December 8, 2008 does not contain any claim objections, and the claim objections made in the Office Action dated November 20, 2007 are believed to be overcome.

Furthermore, independent claims 1, 6 and 11 were amended to include the allowable features of claims 4, 9 and 13, respectively. Further, independent claims 15 and 16 were amended to include the allowable feature of claim 9, while dependent claims 17 and 18 are directed to the allowable features of claim 10. Accordingly, claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10-12, and 14-18 are allowable.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claims 15 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,634,122 to Loucks et al. ("Loucks") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,175,851 to Johnson et al. ("Johnson"). This rejection is traversed for the following reasons. As previously indicated, claims 15 and 16 were amended

to include the subject matter of allowable claim 9. Therefore, claims 15 and 16 should be allowed.

Claims 6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Loucks in view of Johnson, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,884,308 to Foulston. This rejection is traversed for the following reasons. As previously indicated, claim 6 was amended to include the allowable features of claim 9. Therefore, claims 6 and 8 should be allowed.

Claims 1, 3, 11 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Loucks in view of Johnson, further in view of Foulston, and even further in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0110117 to Saidenberg et al. ("Saidenberg"). This rejection is traversed for the following reasons. As previously indicated, claims 1 and 11 were amended to include the allowable features of claims 4 and 13, respectively. Therefore, claims 1, 3, 11 and 12 should be allowed.

New Claims 17 and 18

Claims 17 and 18 are dependent on claims 15 and 16, respectively. Therefore, claims 17 and 18 are allowable for at least the same reasons previously discussed regarding independent claims 15 and 16.

Furthermore, as previously indicated, claims 15 and 16 are directed to the same subject matter of allowable claim 10. Therefore, claims 17 and 18 are in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10-12, and 14-18 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10-12, and 14-18 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Mattingly, Stanger & Malur, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (referencing Attorney Docket No. 1213.43347X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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